

CONSTITUTION

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*For Russell, Rich. B.
Pres Fulbright, J. W.
Pres McCarthy, Eugene*

Senate May Debate How to Check CIA

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WASHINGTON—It appeared likely Tuesday that the Senate soon would debate openly the question whether to expand the "watchdog" committee that provides surveillance over the activities of the Central Intelligence Agency.

Knowledgeable Senate sources were pessimistic, however, about the prospect of rounding up enough votes to force an expansion of the group over its own objections.



It became known Monday that Sen. Richard B. Russell, D-Ga., the group's senior member, had rejected a proposal by the Foreign Relations Committee that three of its members be added to the "watchdogs."

WRITES FULBRIGHT

Russell wrote Sen. J. W. Fulbright, D-Ark., the chairman of the foreign relations committee, to that effect.

Fulbright probably will bring up the matter at a meeting of

his committee scheduled for next week. There was some doubt whether he had enough votes in the committee to take the proposal to the floor of the Senate with committee backing.

If the issue developed through formal action of the foreign relations committee, it would insure floor debate.

MOVE ON FLOOR

If it did not, Sen. Eugene McCarthy, D-Minn., a persistent critic of Congress' method of supervising C.I.A. activities, is prepared to move on the Senate floor to expand the "watchdog" committee.

Experienced Senate headcounters considered it unlikely that, in either case, the Senate would overrule the Russell group and add members of the Foreign Relations Committee to it.

They said Russell, one of the most expert of Senate strategists, would hardly have rejected the opportunity to negotiate the matter with Fulbright if he had not been confident that he could win in a vote of the entire Senate.

WORK IS SECRET

Moreover, it was suggested, a debate would be unlikely to change the situation. For one thing, the Senate is always reluctant to overrule one of its senior chairmen, and this would be particularly so in the case of the C.I.A. supervisory group, since its work is secret and many senators are chary of tampering with "security matters."

The present "watchdog" group is composed entirely of senior members of the appropriations committee and the armed services committee, of which Russell is chairman. These committees have power over the CIA in the Senate.